

A Different Way to Wake Up

Catherine Clarke Fox

When Matty Sallin was 34, he was working on a degree in art and technology at New York University when he got an interesting assignment in electronics class. Matty was to create something to be used at home, so decided to create a new type of alarm clock.

"Everybody has to deal with these every day and they are extremely unpleasant!" he says. He asked different people what they would like to wake up to instead of a clanging alarm. A lot of them said, "The smell of bacon."



When the bacon is cooked, a fan inside the alarm clock blows the scent through the pig's nose.

Photograph by Matty Sallin

So Matty and two classmates invented a new kind of alarm clock. It was a wooden box with a pig face! It had a clock that uses the smell of cooking bacon instead of a sound to wake someone up. He explains, "There's no danger of burning because I built it carefully. It uses special light bulbs instead of a flame for cooking. It turns off automatically after ten minutes." Just a few easy steps are required to set the alarm.

"What you do is put a couple of frozen strips in the night before," says Matty. There is no danger of it spoiling overnight because bacon is preserved.

"If you set the alarm for 8:00, it will turn on at 7:50 and slow cook for ten minutes under the special lightbulbs," he says. Then the bulbs turn off and a fan blows the scent out through the nose of the pig.

"Instead of an alarm or a beep or a radio, you smell yourself awake," says Matty. "Then you can open the door on the side and pull the bacon out and eat it."

Matty spent a lot of time making drawings of inventions when he was a kid. "I wanted to make an elevator in my back yard and a special tree house," he says. "But I never really thought I'd be called an inventor!"

Matty got an A in the class and went on to other things. People continue to hear about his invention and email him every day asking where they can buy his alarm clock. Matty appeared on a season two episode of the national television show *Shark Tank* attempting to find an investor for his Wake n' Bacon. Unfortunately for Matty, none of the investors were interested.

These days he designs computer software. But if he decides to produce and sell his aroma alarm, maybe he can develop some other types of alarm clocks. Any votes for cinnamon buns?

Answer questions number 1-8. Base your answers on the article “A Different Way to Wake Up.”

1. The author includes the photo and text box of the alarm clock to
 - A. share how the alarm clock looks and works.
 - B. imply that the alarm clock is simple to build.
 - C. prove why the alarm clock is too dangerous to buy.
 - D. indicate that the alarm clock would make an unusual present.

2. Based on information in the article, the reader can conclude that
 - A. Matty had a difficult time finding a team to help him built his clock.
 - B. people would buy the clock if it cooked cinnamon buns instead of bacon.
 - C. Matty would rather create unusual inventions instead of attending school.
 - D. people prefer waking up to an enjoyable smell over waking up to loud noise.

3. Read this sentence from the article.

There is no danger of it spoiling overnight because bacon is preserved.

The word *preserved* comes from the Latin word root *serv-* meaning “to save.” What does *preserved* mean?

- A. food that was not able to be saved because it was eaten too quickly
 - B. food that was taken away after it was eaten to be saved for a second meal
 - C. food that was saved in a safe place so it can be eaten again at another time
 - D. food that was treated before it will be eaten so it can be saved for the future

4. The pig’s nose is an important part of the alarm clock because
 - A. the time is set by pushing the buttons on the nose.
 - B. the nose has a heater inside of it that cooks the bacon.
 - C. the smell of bacon flows through the nose to wake up the person.
 - D. the person must twist the nose to turn on a special warming bulb.

5. Read this sentence from the article.

Just a few easy steps are required to set the alarm.

Which sentence below uses the word *steps* the same way it is used above?

- A. Whenever it rains my little brother always purposely steps in the puddle.
- B. Kids like to hang out with their friends and sit on the steps in front of the school.
- C. It is important to carefully follow the steps when putting together a new bicycle.
- D. The map showed that you must walk four steps past the tree to find the treasure.

6. Read this sentence from the article.

He asked different people what they would like to wake up to instead of a clanging alarm.

Why does the author use the word *clanging* instead of “loud” in the sentence above?

- A. to explain that most alarm clocks are made of wood
- B. to indicate that many alarm clocks sound unpleasant
- C. to imply that some alarm clocks can be scary to people
- D. to suggest that certain alarm clocks are stranger than others

7. Which statement best explains what the article is mainly about?

- A. A man builds an alarm clock that looks like a pig and sells it to his friends.
- B. A man invents an alarm clock that wakes people up with the smell of bacon.
- C. A man is asked to come up with a way to help people wake up in a good mood.
- D. A man is given an assignment for a class and has trouble coming up with an idea.

8. Which detail from the article helps show that Matty has always enjoyed creating things?

- A. Matty appeared on a national television show.
- B. Matty received a good grade in his electronics class.
- C. Matty spent lots of time drawing inventions as a kid.
- D. Matty worked towards a degree in art and technology.

Snow Day in Space

By Roxanne Werner Art by Craig Stapley



The clock must be frozen. Or maybe the space station fell into a time warp and I'm trapped in my math lesson forever. The truth is that time doesn't fly when you're waiting for something, and I've waited for a friend for a long time.

Crackle. "The radius..." *Crackle.* Static swirls across the holo-video screen, burying my teacher's image in a blizzard of white noise that my dad and I nicknamed *snow*.

A voice comes over the loudspeakers. "Magnetic storm. Communications down. Remain in shielded areas. Technicians report to..."

The announcement drones on, but I don't listen. A *snow day*. Hurray for space weather!

Eleven years ago, my birth on Space Station Alpha made history. I was the first human born off-planet. My parents knew just what to name me—Jemison Mae, after Mom's hero, Mae Jemison, the first black female astronaut. Except I feel more like a science experiment than a hero.

It didn't take doctors long to discover I was different. Sure, on the outside I look normal. Just your average 11-year-old girl. But *inside* I flunk every test. My bones are too thin and my muscles are too weak. It seems humans don't grow well in the low-gravity, antiseptic halls of space stations. Not well enough to survive on Earth, anyway. I am sentenced to life in space.

After they figured this out, no other kids were allowed on board the space station. But new studies show that older children won't be harmed by a short stay. Today, a shuttle will arrive carrying a new technician and her family, including a girl my age. My first friend, Vianna. Freed from class by the snow day, I race down the corridor to message her.

Spending 11 years on the station has its advantages. I know more about it than anyone else does, even the commander. Other than my parents and me, most people spend one or two years here, then return to Earth. I've explored every inch of the place and uncovered some useful items.

When I was five, one of the techs showed me the Space Alpha Text booth, or S.A.T. "Practice your letters on this, Jem," he said. "No one uses it now that we have the holo-video." The small room held a keyboard and the outdated communications system. I sat for hours fascinated by the way the screen lit up as I tapped the keys. The booth became my secret hideout, a place to disappear.

Now I shut the door and slide behind the keyboard. Vianna and I have been exchanging messages for months. We're not allowed to tie up the holo-video system with chatter, but I got the S.A.T. going after looking through old manuals. I tap in my code and read her message: *Jem, something's wrong—a storm.* I type back: *Don't worry. It's a magnetic storm, a snow day. We get them a lot.*

Vianna's words flash back: *You sure? My parents and the pilot look worried.*

Before I can answer, a message flashes in caps: *WE CAN'T DOCK!*

I bolt out the door, heading for the command room. The tension stops me in the doorway like a force field. "Captain, the holo-video won't work during the storm," my father is saying. "They'll have to try docking by sight."

"With shields up, they don't have visual. They're flying blind," the captain says.

I clear my throat. "Could they lower the shields?" The captain shakes his head. "Dropping the shields would kill them. Even *with* shields they're in danger in a full-blown storm like this."

"No!" I cry.

My father puts his hands on my shoulders. "Jem, we're doing everything we can."

Tears slide down my cheeks.

"Snow days are supposed to be fun."



He sighs. "Snow days *can* be fun, when you're safe at home. But like real snow on Earth, it can be dangerous if you're stranded or traveling. The station's shields are indestructible, but the shuttle's shields aren't as strong as the station's. If the holo-video worked, we could talk them in."

"Can you *text* them in?" I ask. "With the S.A.T.?"

The captain looks over. "What are you talking about?"

"An old system, before holo-video," my father explains. "It hasn't been used in years."

"Does it still work?" says the captain.

"It does," I blurt out. "I've been texting Vianna for months."

"You're in touch with the shuttle?" My father rushes me to the S.A.T. booth.

Techs swarm my hideout. I give one tech my code and watch her fingers fly over the keyboard. Messages flash back and forth as techs feed docking coordinates to the shuttle.

Minutes pass.

Then the message I've waited for fills the screen: *Jem, meet me in the docking bay. –Vianna*

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Answer questions number 9-16. Base your answers on the passage “Snow Day in Space.”

9. When Jem realizes her class will be canceled for the day she
- A. takes the captain to her secret hideout.
 - B. runs to the text booth to message her friend.
 - C. heads for the command room to use holo-video.
 - D. listens to the announcement on the loudspeaker.
10. What is the main problem in the passage?
- A. A snowstorm is causing children to miss school on Earth.
 - B. A magnetic storm is causing a space shuttle to be in danger.
 - C. A captain and his team are having difficulties fixing a shuttle.
 - D. A girl is too weak to grow well because she was born in space.
11. How does Jem help Vianna and her family arrive safely?
- A. Jem gives them landing directions using an old manual.
 - B. Jem makes them drop the shields so they can better see.
 - C. Jem suggests using the holo-video to guide the shuttle in.
 - D. Jem reveals how she is able to communicate with the shuttle.
12. Why does Jem conclude that she knows more about the space station than anyone else?
- A. She has studied more books than anyone else.
 - B. She has used the text booth more than anyone else.
 - C. She has spent more time exploring than anyone else.
 - D. She has conducted more experiments than anyone else.

13. Read these sentences from the passage.

But like real snow on Earth, it can be dangerous if you're stranded or traveling. The station's shields are indestructible, but the shuttle's shields aren't as strong as the station's.

The origin of the word *indestructible* is the Latin root *-struct*, meaning "to build." What does *indestructible* mean?

- A. not able to be easily destroyed
- B. creating a project with another person
- C. joining parts together in the wrong way
- D. to put a broken object back together again

14. How did being born on the space station effect Jem?

- A. Her body is unable to survive on Earth.
- B. She became a hero to other astronauts.
- C. She fails all of the math tests given to her.
- D. Her muscles are stronger than the average girl.

15. Which sentence from the passage best explains what "Snow Day in Space" is mainly about?

- A. I give one tech my code and watch her fingers fly over the keyboard.
- B. I sat for hours fascinated by the way the screen lit up as I tapped the keys.
- C. After they figured this out, no other kids were allowed on board the space station.
- D. Today, a shuttle will arrive carrying a new technician and her family, including a girl my age.

16. Which of the following events happens first?

- A. The space shuttle arrives at the station with Vianna and her family.
- B. A technician shows Jem how to use the text booth to practice her letters.
- C. A magnetic storm interrupts the lesson Jem was having with her teacher.
- D. Vianna sends a message stating her shuttle is unable to dock at the station.

Star-Spangled Seamstress

By Lynn E. McElfresh

A Family of Flag Makers

It started with a snip, then a cut, and then stitch after tiny stitch. Caroline Pickersgill was thirteen years old when she began the largest sewing project of her life. It was the summer of 1813. She had no idea that the finished product would inspire a song Americans know by heart.

Caroline learned how to sew from her mother, a widow who was a “maker of colours,” as flag makers were called at the time. Like Caroline, Mrs. Pickersgill had learned how to make flags from her mother. Rebecca Young, Caroline’s grandmother, had made flags for the Continental Army during the American Revolution. The three women were a family of flag makers.

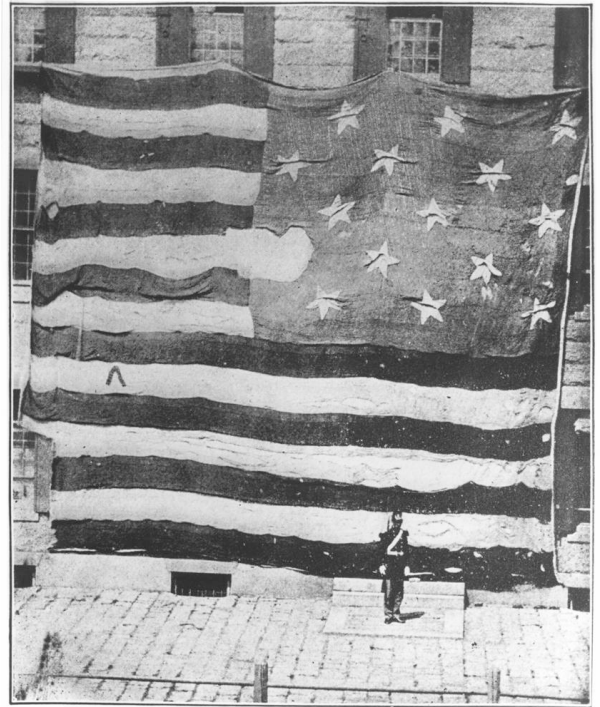
An Unusual Request

America was at war with the British again in the summer of 1813. The British navy was attacking towns up and down the Atlantic coast. Rumors spread that the British would attack Baltimore, where the family of flag makers lived at 60

Albemarle Street. Early in July, two officers from nearby Fort McHenry knocked at their door. Major George Armistead, the fort’s commander, wanted the Pickersgills to sew a flag so big that “the British will have no difficulty in seeing it from a distance.”

Immediately, the family of flag makers began to work on the huge banner. They gathered materials: four hundred yards of red, white, and blue English wool bunting, and white American cotton for the stars. Next, they cut. Caroline and her mother snipped fifteen stars. Each measured two feet from point to point. They cut and sewed eight red and seven white stripes, each two feet wide.

When it came time to stitch the flag together, they had a problem. No room in their house was big enough to lay out a flag so large. Caroline and her mother asked the owner of a brewery down the street if they could spread the flag on the malthouse floor after the brewery closed for the evening. Night after night, Caroline, her mother, and her grandmother worked by candlelight. Using linen thread, they joined the stars and stripes with small, tight stitches. After six weeks of snipping and stitching, the finished flag measured thirty feet by forty-two feet. Hung lengthwise, it was as tall as a four-story building.



The first-known photograph of the flag was taken at the Boston Navy Yard in the 1870s.

Soldiers from Fort McHenry picked up the flag from Mrs. Pickersgill on August 13, 1813. The flag makers were paid \$405.90 for their efforts. (Many of the men who worked along the docks didn't earn that sum in a year.) The flag Caroline had worked so frantically to finish was put into storage as the men waited and prepared for the British. It would be more than a year before the flag would be hoisted over the garrison.

The Battle of Baltimore

On August 19, 1814, the British fleet entered Chesapeake Bay. Their first target was the capital city, Washington. The night of August 24, Caroline saw the glow of flames on the horizon as Washington burned forty miles away. Would Baltimore be next?

Early in the morning of September 13, British ships turned their attention to Fort McHenry. The star-shaped fort was all that stood between the city of Baltimore and the British fleet. Into the rainy night, the British fired 1,500 bombs and Congreve rockets at the fort. Fiery red arcs blazed across the sky. Explosions mixed with thunder. All night, Baltimore shook with the sounds of war.

Two hours before dawn, an eerie silence settled over the harbor. No bombs burst. No rockets glared. What did the silence mean? Was the battle over? Had Fort McHenry surrendered? All of Baltimore wondered as they waited for dawn.

A Song is Inspired

Francis Scott Key wondered, too. Key was a Washington lawyer and amateur poet waiting aboard a ship eight miles from the Baltimore harbor. After the burning of Washington, Key visited the British fleet anchored in Chesapeake Bay to ask for the release of a friend held prisoner there. While successful in his mission, Key was detained at sea by the British.

Using a spyglas, Key searched the dawn sky until he saw what he had been hoping for. He saw Caroline's banner—the great red, white, and blue flag—proudly wave in the breeze above Fort McHenry! The British had given up. The fort and Baltimore had been saved.



Francis Scott Key, 1779-1843.

Sometime before dawn the rain-soaked storm flag had been lowered, and the great new flag had been hoisted for the British fleet to see as they sailed from the harbor. The sight of the flag inspired Key to write a poem that was soon set to music. A month later, a Baltimore actor who sang Key's song in a public performance called it "The Star-Spangled Banner."

The Americans went on to win the War of 1812. Many feel that the Battle of Baltimore was the turning point in the war.

In 1931, “The Star-Spangled Banner” officially became our National Anthem. Today, the banner Caroline helped to stitch—the fifteen-star-and-fifteen-stripe flag that inspired Francis Scott Key—is at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C., where it is being restored.

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Answer questions number 17-24. Base your answers on the passage “Star-Spangled Seamstress.”

17. The section “A Family of Flag Makers” is important to the article because it
- A. describes how to make a giant flag for your own family
 - B. explains why the family was chosen to make the special flag
 - C. suggests that every family during that time knew how to make a flag
 - D. indicates that only the women in a family were taught how to make a flag
18. The photo of the flag is important to the article because it supports the idea that
- A. the women should have stored the flag in a museum.
 - B. the flag was sewn together too quickly and incorrectly.
 - C. the flag was large enough to be seen from a long distance.
 - D. the women should have been paid more money for making the flag.
19. Why does the commander ask the women to make the flag, but then wait over a year before it is flown?
- A. He thought it would take the women a long time to sew it together.
 - B. He believed the British would attempt to steal it if they saw it too soon.
 - C. He was waiting for the poem and song to be written before he hung it up.
 - D. He wanted to be prepared for when the British made their attack on Baltimore.
20. Read these sentences from the article.

After the burning of Washington, Key visited the British fleet anchored in Chesapeake Bay to ask for the release of a friend held prisoner there. While successful in his mission, Key was detained at sea by the British.

The origin of the word *detained* is the Latin root *-tain*, meaning “to hold.” What does *detain* mean?

- A. to be held so tightly you are unable to breathe
- B. to hold a person responsible for their behavior
- C. to be held away from where you are wanting to be
- D. to hold an object for a person while you wait for them

21. Why did the women sew the flag at the brewery instead of at their house?

- A. Their house was too small to spread it out on the floor.
- B. The brewery was guarded and kept safe by soldiers.
- C. Their house was too close to places being attacked.
- D. The brewery was the only place with electricity.

22. Read this sentence from the article.

He saw Caroline's banner—the great red, white, and blue flag—proudly wave in the breeze above Fort McHenry!

Which sentence below uses the word *wave* the same way it is used in the sentence above?

- A. The surfer was eagerly waiting for a wave large enough to ride towards the shoreline.
- B. I felt a wave of motion sickness flow through my stomach after riding the roller coaster.
- C. I tried using some water to flatten out the wave of hair that kept curling up on my forehead.
- D. My grandmother enjoys sitting on her porch and watching the branches wave during the storm.

23. When Francis Scott Key saw Caroline's flag, he learned that

- A. Americans were hiding on British ships.
- B. Fort McHenry surrendered to the British.
- C. Baltimore had been saved from the British.
- D. Washington had been burned by the British.

24. Which of the following events happened LAST?

- A. Key set his poem to music.
- B. Key asked for the release of his friend.
- C. Key had his song performed by an actor.
- D. Key wrote down his thoughts about the flag.